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ABSTRACT

The paper describes the Stepping Stone Model, a model for the remediation and mainstreaming of secondary learning disabled students and the adaptation of curriculum and materials for the model. The Stepping Stone Model is designed to establish the independence of students in the mainstream through content reading. Five areas of concern common to each of the five steps in the model are: teaching study skills, developing self concept, fostering responsibility and freedom of choice, providing for parent involvement, and preparing remediation curriculum and support materials for the regular classroom. The five steps range from the first level for educable and trainable mentally handicapped students 16 years or older (which focuses on vocational and functional skill development in a self contained classroom setting) to the fifth level at which the student is 100% mainstreamed. Steps in the writing of an adapted curriculum include needs assessment of the student, cooperation with the regular teacher as to the scope and sequence of the course content, and selection of materials at an appropriate reading level covering the necessary content. (PHR)

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Secondary Special Education

Part I

The "Stepping Stone Model" Designed For Secondary Learning Disabled Students

Part II

Adapting Materials and Curriculum

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Part I. The "Stepping Stone Model" Designed For Secondary Learning Disabled Students

In implementing P.L. 94-142, the term "mainstreaming" has come to a focal point. Mainstreaming has been defined as, "the integration of eligible handicapped children and normal peers based upon individually determined education needs which necessitates the shared responsibilities for planning and programming by regular and special education administrative and instructional personnel." (Houck, Sherman 1979) Houck and Sherman also point out that there are various reasons to mainstream. "There is a need for deemphasis on isolation and labeling; increased protection of human rights; individualization in all phases of education; increased attention to the development of the total child including his social and emotional well-being; and, from an administrative standpoint, greater cost-efficiency in the delivery of services which mainstreaming advocates claim are its strengths." It has also come to people's attention that services must span K-12. The need for services at the secondary level has been supported by the evidence that many youngsters involved in K-6 programs still lack the necessary skills in junior and senior high to be successful in the regular classroom. (Deshler, Alley, and Warner 1978) This is one of the reasons secondary programs have been funded. There now appears to be some confusion as how to meet the needs of the secondary students. A recent study at the University of Kansas showed the variety of secondary programs in existence at present. (Deshler, Lowrey, and Alley 1979) According to this study, 45% of the programs surveyed had characteristics of the "Basic Skills Remediation Approach". However, four other models were identified as possibilities and there was an indication that few programs were hastily put together and lacked direction. The emphasis on basic skills would suggest a lack of emphasis on mainstreaming. In another study done at the University of Kentucky, a large number of graduates indicated that mainstreaming was not applicable in

future teaching. Since mainstreaming is mandated by law, this suggest a problem. (Middleton, Morsink, and Cohen 1979) The Kansas study also noted that four factors were reviewed when selecting a model; first, the severity of the student's problems; second, the student's age; third, the training of the teacher; and fourth, the number of support services, staff capabilities, and the attitude of the administration. Taking into consideration these factors and the lack of a consensus for a specific mocel, it seems that a directional, adaptive model for remediating and eventually mainstreaming secondary students is warranted. Therefore, this writing will be concerned with: The Stepping Stone Model.

In order that the reader has a common vocabulary the following terms are used as follows: academic classes required to graduate are referred to as "content courses"; academic classes taught within the special education room, remedial or adaptive, are referred to as "self-contained courses"; using materials to correct reading faults is referred to as "corrective reading"; using materials to teach a sequential development of reading skills is referred to as "developmental reading"; a course designed to develope skills is referred to as a "remedial course"; and a course designed to teach a self-contained content course is referred to as an "adaptive course".

The basic philosophy of the Stepping Stone Model is to remediate through content reading. The goal of this model is to establish the independence of students in the mainstream including independent living. In order to achieve this goal and maintain this philosophy, the model must span a variety of people. These include students with handicaps from severely learning disabled to mildly learning disabled, regular teachers, special education personnel, administration, parents, and community.

There are five areas of concern that are common in each step of the model which help the students meet the goal. The first is teaching study

skills. Many students lack the ability to set deadlines for completion of assignments, take notes, and prepare for tests. These skills should be emphasized at each level. The second area of concern is self-concept. Letting students succeed is an important aspect of this model. Not only academically, but also in an area of personal interest. "Success breeds success." It is important to note that they should be challenged in order that they can have a feeling of being successful. Responsibility and freedom of choice is the third area of concern. Give the student the responsibility to complete a list of assignments and the opportunity to choose which assignments to complete first. Let the student continue this only as long as all assignments are completed. The teacher must carefully estimate the amount of work to assign during a specific time in order to allow for success. Parent involvement makes up the fourth area of concern. Keep them active in their student's program. This creates an unity in the student's environments. The final and most time consuming area is that of preparing remediation curriculum, adaptive curriculum, and support materials for the regular classroom.

The model itself involves five-steps. The first step, the self-contained/remedial, involves two types of students. Those who fit the E.M.R./T.M.R. criteria and those students, 16 and older, who have a severe learning disability. These students have usually spent a great majority of their school years in special education. The programs involved at this level are primarily vocational and functional. Some remedial curriculum may be used. The purpose at this level is one to one instruction on skills vital to daily living. The goal is to prepare the students to survive independently in the world of work. Involvement in special education at this level includes 100% of all academic classes/self-contained. Once a student is placed at this level, the school district should determine how to handle the graduation requirements of that student.

The second step, the tutorial/self-contained/remedial, involves those students. 16 and under, who have below fourth grade word attack skills. These students tend to have a record of failure in the regular classroom and have been involved in special education before. Because these students are younger, their chances of returning to the mainstream are higher. The programs involved at this level offer the opportunity for the student to be enrolled in some adaptive curriculum (exp. English), receive tutorial help (exp. Science), and remediate skills (exp. Reading/Spelling). The purpose of this step is not only to reduce the work load but also to provide an increased knowledge in a content area by adapting regular classroom materials, allow remediation time, and create success in the regular classroom. The goal of this step is to remediate skills to the point of re-entering the regular classroom in all academics. The involvement at this level includes one hour for each adaptive course and one hour for the tutorial/remediation course.

The tutorial/remedial is the third step in the model. This involves those students who have word attack skills above fourth grade and low comprehension skills. Scores in the regular classroom tend to be low to failing. The programs at this level include remedial curriculum and materials adapted for use in the regular classes. The purpose of this step is to provide adapted materials designed to improve comprehension in the regular classroom and to continue to remediate skills. The goal at this step is to improve confidence and skills to the level at which students can function independently of special education. The involvement at this level would be one hour in the special education room.

The fourth step in the model is the consulting/monoriting. This involves students who are just within the criterion to qualify for special education. The programs at this level consist of progress reports in regular classes and adapted materials. The purpose here is to provide adapted classroom materials

that could be completed independently and to help the regular classroom teacher handle the "mildly handicapped? within their classroom. The goal is to improve confidence and provide support which will get the student to a point at which he or she can function independently of special education. There is no actual involvement during the school day within the special education classroom during this step except to pick up independent work.

That leads to the fifth and final level which is to be 100% mainstreamed. At this step the child study team should recommend that the student no longer needs the services of special education and the student should be staffed out.

It is appropriate at this time to note that the student's placement, as stated, is mainly based on grade level. However, there is an additional factor to take into consideration; motivation. A lack of motivation or desire to achieve could move the student up or down the ladder. Classroom attendance, completion of homework or the attempt, and general enthusiasm are good indicators of motivation.

It is also appropriate to state the importance of structure. Because of the great variety of programs offered and different types of students served, it is necessary to be very structured. The way to accomplish this is careful preparation of scope and sequences, knowledge in adapting regular classroom materials, and careful selection of materials. Also use of audio-visual materials and aides will allow for more time for teacher planning. To accomplish this there is a need for inservice not only for the special education personnel but also for the regular teacher. "The unplanned implementation of the (mainstream) concept is as sure to fail as initiation of the open-classroom concept where personnel have not been prepared. Given sufficient committment to insure its successful implementation, mainstreaming should allow the quality of education to improve for all children, not just those with handicaps." (Houck, Sherman 1979) A recent survey

indicated that instructional procedures/classroom management and curricular/ programs/materials/resources were of greatest concerns for inservices topics. (Rude 1978)

Another point to make is that a school should select the step that is most appropriate to their school and population. However, the other steps should be made available as student's needs change. Also, each time a student is moved to a different level a child study team meeting should be held.

The main reason for the workability of this program is that it allows for noticeable progress for the student without letting him or her flounder in the mainstream. The students are lifted into the mainstream as their confidence and skills improve. The model opens channels of communication and can be adapted to fit a school's population.

Part II. Adapting Materials and Curriculum

Before continuing it is necessary to refer to the definition quoted on "mainstreaming". The key words,again, are eligble and shared responsibility. The shared responsibility is where techniques for adapting materials and curriculum are needed. These types of materials would be most useful in Steps II, III, and IV of the Stepping Stone Model.

When writing an adapted curriculum for a content course, there are definite steps that should be followed.The first is to determine the needs of the student to be served. The information to do this would include the educational background, the current academic level, and the regular class work load. Once it is recommended by the Child Study Team that the student is in need of this type of curriculum, the "shared responsibility" begins. The regular teacher must supply a scope and sequence of what is to be covered during the year and a tentative schedule of what will be included in each nine week period or however it is divided. Once the special education teacher has recieved this information, it is necessary to select materials at the appropriate reading level and covering the necessary information. Since not all materials emphasis the same facts, once the material is collected it is time to go back to the regular teacher. At this point substitutions and deletions can be made based on materials found and teacher agreement. An example would be substituting map skills in a history scope and sequence for a minor chapter. When this is accomplished, the next step is to make a list of assignments necessary to cover the adapted scope and sequence, taking into consideration any films and/or guest speakers the regular teacher may have scheduled in their class. These assignments should be specific, including number of pages to be read, question to be answer, and/or special tasks to do. The organization of these assignments

includes determing when the entire scope and sequence should be finished, allowing for testing periods. Once this has been established, a check list of assignments and completion dates should be prepared for student use. At this time the special education teacher needs to establish a grading plicy. The work is now complete and approval by the regular teacher and/or department is needed. Once the program is approved and the student begins, the regular teacher should be kept posted on progress and remined to include the student in special presentations. The student's work should be monorited carefully by the special education teacher.

A second type of curriculum to prepare is a remedial/self-contained course. An example of this course would be a scope and sequence in English that leads a student back to the mainstream. The first step in preparing this material is to write a criterion referenced test. A brief outline of the steps in preparing a C.R.T. follows:

1. Write objectives of those skills which are expected to have been learned.
   A. Those taught up to the point of entry.
   B. Those expected to be mastered before entry.
2. Write Test A of items (preferably multiple choice) testing each objective.
3. Give Test A
   A. To students who are considered to have learned objectives.
   B. To students who are considered to have not been exposed to objective.
4. Revision
   A. Delete items and objectives failed by group A.
   B. Delete items and abjectives passed by group B.
   C. Consider validity of the item for accurately testing objective.

5. Write Test B and give to students at the point of entry.

6. Future Changes

   A. Change in teacher scope and sequence.

   B. Invalid test items revised.

   C. Write a different form of the same test.

Once the test has been written and validated, it can be used as a placement guide for remedial skills in the subject. The way to accomplish this is to assume that when an item is missed it has not been learned. The remedial program would then include a learning packet for each unlearned objective prepared by either the regular teacher or the special education teacher.

A third way to share responsibility with the regular teacher is adapting materials for content tutoring. The regular teacher's responsibility here is to provide upcoming assignments to the special education teacher. It is then the special education teacher's responsibility to prepare adapted materials on that assignment for the student or students involved in his or her program.

There are four types of materials a special education teacher can prepare. One type is recordings. Recording texts is a way of getting the information to the student orally with a minimum of teacher time. A second type of material includes work sheets to be completed as the student does the regular classroom reading assignments. Another type of adapted material involves a resource catalog of audio-visual aides and/or low-level reading materials available on various subjects. A last way to support the regular teacher is by using their assignment to remediate the student's skills. This does two things. First, it builds an understanding of the material, and secondly, it helps to make sure assignments are

completed. Along with these materials, progress reports are needed. These reports allow the regular teacher and the special education teacher to communicate not only more freguently, but also in a way that is more applicable to the student. This is because a written report can be shown to the student.

Other ways to work with the regular teacher is to share the information about the student's ability, make the adapted material available for their use with other students, and provide ideas for working with the learning disabled students in their classroom.

It takes time to establish these types of materials in the special education program. Some are an ongoing project. However, once a foundation is established teacher time is minimized not only for the special education teachers , but also for the regular classroom teacher. This allows more time for adapting new materials.

Materials used the the Stepping Stone Model

Step I. Self-contained/remedial

- A. Reading
  - 1. Functional-sight words
  - 2. Developmental
- B. Consumer Skills
  - 1. Math
  - 2. Applications and forms
- C. Basic Spelling
  - 1. Personal Knowledge
  - 2. Add-a-word
- D. Comprehension Skills
  - 1. Current Events

Step II. Tutorial/ Self-contained/remedial

- A. Reading
  - 1. Sight words
  - 2. Developmental
  - 3. Corrective
- B. Math
  - 1. Basic Skills
  - 2. Consumer
  - 3. Content
- C. Basic Spelling (add-a-word)
- D. Adaptive Course * **
  - 1. Scope and Sequences
  - 2. Appropriate materials
- E. Adapted Materials
  - 1. Study guides
  - 2. Recordings
- F. Remedial Curriculum
  - 1. English *
  - 2. Math *
- G. Consulting and Communications
  - 1. Parents - progress slips
  - 2. Teachers - Materials

Step III. Tutorial/remedial

A. Reading

1. Comprehension

2. Content

B. Math (same)

C. Basic Spelling (same)

D. Adaptive Materials (same)

E. Consulting and Communication (same)

Step IV. Consulting/Monoriting

A. Adaptive Materials (same)

B. Consulting and Communication (same)

Step V. 100% Mainstreamed

*Should be designed to give student required course credit.

**Science cannot be taught in Special Education because of the inability to offer a lab.

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